(b) and (c) The COAS's visit was part of the continuing process of exchange of high level goodwill visit to the armed forces of various friendly countries. Discussions were held in the U.S. in keeping with Government's policy of promoting defence cooperation with friendly countries."

Representation from Ex-Service Officers Welfare Association (Maharashtra)

1360. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news item which appeared in the Hindustan Times dated the 13th September, 1991 titled "Government for welfare of Ex-soldiers";

(b) whether it is an fact that a representation from Ex-Service Officers welfare Association (Maharashtra) is pending with the Ministry;

(c) if so, what are the reasons for delay; and

(d) by when action will be taken in the matter?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) Copies of the representation of the Association, addressed to the Department of Personnel & Training, Ministry of Finance etc. have been received in the Ministdy of Defence. Since it pertains to the *inter-se-seniority* of ex-ECOs/SSCOs, re-employed in the State Bank of India, a decision on the representation will be taken by the administrative Ministry, viz Banking Division of the Department of Economic Affairs in the Ministry of Finance.

Handing over of Cantonments to Municipal Corporations

1361. SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:
SHRI SHIV PRATAP MISHRA:

Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government propose to amend the Military Cantonment Board Act to hand over the Cantonments to corresponding Municipal Corporations or Councils;

(b) if so, what are the details thereof and by when a decision in this regard is likely to be taken; and

(c) if not, what are reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR): (a) to (c) Government have not yet initiated any proposal to amend the Cantonments Act, 1924, or to merge the Cantonments with the adjoining Municipal bodies.

Compulsory Military Training

1362. DR. NARREDDY THULASI REDDY: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether there is any proposal to introduce compulsory military training for a period of not less than one year for all able-bodies persons who have attained the age of 18 years;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI SHARAD PAWAR) (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) Introduction of compulsory military training would not be fully consonant with the democratic those of our country. Moreover, the benefits according therefrom are not likely to be commensurate with the enormous expenditure involved.